

Effective January, 2011, Updated January 2018

## NW EYE CARE OFFICE POLICY

Dear Patient,

Thank you for choosing Northwest Eye Care Professionals for all of your vision care. Our goal is to provide you with the best possible care and service. Our mission statement is “*We develop and improve lives by meeting the unique visual needs of our patients*”. To maintain this goal, we live by the philosophy of “Nothing is more important than the patient.” To achieve this goal, we have certain policies that we follow.

**Medical Examinations:** Physicians must follow accepted national guidelines when determining what your charges (or level of service) will be. They must code your visit based upon what services were provided and cannot take into account particular health plan benefits. If a patient is referred to our office, as we are the specialist, most likely the examination will be billed medically. Consequently, we are unable to switch the visit reason and diagnosis in order for a claim to be covered by your vision insurance. Evaluations could be billed medically due to the diagnosis and level of service. This information is not completed until the exam has been completed. If the examination completed is medical, the evaluation may include a **\$50.00 refraction fee** not typically paid for by medical insurance. The refraction is the portion of the examination that determines your refractive state, or prescription. Our office will bill your refraction as a courtesy to your insurance, unless you are covered by Medicare.

**Insurance Responsibility:** To keep billing costs down, payment is due at the time that services are rendered. With today’s health insurance companies, there is **no guarantee of payment** until the claim is processed. We will call your insurance company as a courtesy and try to provide an estimated reimbursement amount. To achieve this estimated reimbursement, you need to provide a current copy of your vision **and** medical insurance cards. This may be asked of you every visit. (*While each patient is responsible for knowing their own benefits, we will do our best to translate the information for you.*) If your insurance company changes, we need to be made aware of this change **before** your appointment(s). If we are not notified, there is a chance that all referrals or authorizations have become invalid and you are responsible for all charges and will be required to pay at the time of service. This may also result in the requirement of an ABN being signed.

While filing the claim within your insurance is a courtesy that we extend to our patients, all charges incurred are ultimately the responsibility of the patient from the date the services are rendered. If the insurance does not pay within 90 days, you, the patient, will be responsible to pay the balance. If the services are reimbursed by the insurance after 90 days, you will receive a refund. After the insurance has paid their portion, remaining balances are due and payable within 30 days of the first billing. After 30 days, a service fee of \$10.00 will be charged to your account and will show on your statement. We assign all unpaid accounts to an outside collection agency that report to a national credit bureau. They will add additional penalties and interest to the unpaid amount.

**NSF:** There is a \$30.00 fee for checks returned unpaid by the bank. Until a good credit history is established after a returned check, all further transactions must be paid by credit card or in cash.

**Referrals:** Referrals are the responsibility of the patient to obtain from the primary care provider. This must be done before your appointment. If a referral is not obtained, the insurance will not be

billed and the patient is ultimately responsible. All new patients to NWECP will be required to obtain the referral *prior* to the appointment. Without a diagnosis, we cannot obtain a referral for you until you have had a completed exam within our office.

**PIP/WC Claims:** To bill an Auto Insurance or PIP claim due to an injury or accident, our office needs to be supplied with all pertinent billing information prior to the time of your first appointment. These services cannot be pre-approved. If you have a Workers Compensation claim, this information will need to be provided prior to your appointment as each injured worker must be approved *before* services are rendered.

**Broken Appointments:** We ask that you notify our office 24 hours in advance if you are unable to make your scheduled appointment. Our office carries a large cancellation list and has opportunities to provide services to patients on a short notice. Broken appointments will be charged to the patients account.

**Optical Services/Contact Materials:** All optical sales and custom contact sales are final sales. Eyeglasses and RGP/Ortho K lenses are custom made and cannot be returned for either frame changes or to the manufacturer. Our optical staff will provide many options of frames and give expertise on lens options prior to ordering. However, there are specific warranties on most products for doctor changes of prescriptions and scratch warranty replacements. Please inquire in the optical department for these services.

**Payment Types:** At NWECP, we currently accept a variety of payment options for your balances due. Our current options for payment are the following: Cash, checks, all major credit cards including American Express, NWECP gift certificates and Care Credit interest deferred for either 6 or 12 month financing. The terms will depend on the amount being requested to finance. Please inquire with one of our eye care professionals to find out more about this option. (Patients can also sign up for Care Credit financing before their appointment online at CareCredit.com.)

**Pictures:**

As of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, NWECP will be obtaining pictures of our patients for our secure electronic medical record. For our minor patients, we will be checking the ID of the guardian who is present with them at the time of the appointment. You may have requested to present the ID at every appointment.

**Interns:** Lastly, our office is a teaching facility for Pacific University. It is not uncommon to have an intern (or student doctor) involved in your examination. If you suffer from a stamina disorder and feel that the intern should not be involved, please advise our office before the appointment. Please keep in mind that this will add time to your office visit.

Thank you for your understanding. If there are any questions, please be sure to ask.  
-NW Eye Care Professionals LLC

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